

Platonist Ralph Cudworth. She demonstrates how each poet, in his own way, intimates that the same (divine) matter constitutes both plants—especially trees—and humans. The subsequent chapter, “Zoic Poetry: Animals, Ornithology, and the Ethics of Empathy,” notes the era’s enthusiasm for animal specimen (on view, for example, in John Tradescant’s personal museum) and then explores a poetic tendency to seek inspiration rather than profit in the contemplation of animal life. Milton figures prominently in this section; McColley argues, “He presents Eden not only as a paradise lost by the original sin but as an arena of original righteousness to be renewed” (149). McColley then elaborates empathetic impulses toward animals in Chapter Six, “Animal Ethics and Radical Justice.” Suturing together discussions of Aristotle, Plutarch, the bible, and early-modern theologians such as John Calvin and Godfrey Goodman, she implies that poets articulate the most effective resistance to species abuse because they “awaken human consciences to the effects of violence on other species and its possible relation to violence toward our own” (195).

There is much to sympathize with in McColley’s treatment of the subject at hand. Scholars who are skeptical of a presentist approach may resist her claim that “Seventeenth-century England had the same ‘environmental’ problems we have today” (2). Others might wish for greater synthesis of the lengthy passages quoting various theologians and natural historians and philosophers. Nevertheless, she amply demonstrates that the poets in her study awaken us to aspects of nature and language that we might otherwise never experience. It is unfortunate that her book was not edited more carefully; typos, missing words, and irregularities in font size distract readers from her complex ideas. But curious readers will no doubt be rewarded by McColley’s insights into early-modern sensibilities that commune with nature.

Heather Dubrow. *The Challenges of Orpheus: Lyric Poetry and Early Modern England*. Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008. x + 293 pp. \$49.95. Review by JANE HEDLEY, BRYN MAWR COLLEGE.

Among scholars of the lyric, and especially of Renaissance lyric poetry, Heather Dubrow is surely the most flexibly-minded. Like her

other three book-length studies of early modern poetry, *Captive Victors: Shakespeare's Narrative Poems and Sonnets* (1987), *A Happier Eden: The Politics of Marriage in the Stuart Epithalamium* (1990), and *Echoes of Desire: English Petrarchism and its Counterdiscourses* (1995), this latest book takes an approach to the lyric's rhetorical and performative dimensions that is inextricably formalist and New Historical. It is an approach that fully accepts the challenge implicit in her title's plural noun "challenges": to resist oversimplification, both of the complex figure of Orpheus and of the poetry that was produced in England under his aegis in the sixteenth and seventeenth century. As Dubrow's introductory chapter points out, many definitions and conceptions of lyric, many different kinds of guilt, inhibition and transgression as well as of potency and empowerment, were associated with its production, reception and circulation.

The Challenges of Orpheus is more ambitious in scope than Dubrow's other three books, and includes some of her most important thinking to date about issues that are central to the study of lyric poetry in any period. The distinctiveness of her approach and of her scholarly voice are apparent both microcosmically, as she speaks from the page in a prose that is nuanced and witty, and macrocosmically in the interlocking problematics she has delineated for study: the status of lyric as a literary kind; the vexed question of its relation to narrative; the audiences it presupposes and/or seeks to engage; the expectations of immediacy, presence and "voiceability" that it resists or modulates with distancing devices of many kinds; the co-existence of length and brevity, fluidity and stability, in stanzaic poems and lyric sequences. Within each of these interlocking foci, "the variety and lability of lyric" are what this study is seeking to demonstrate. Every chapter takes issue with critical and scholarly commonplaces that have been wrongly presupposed as a kind of bedrock for the study of the lyric, in order to show how much more shifting and multi-dimensional is the terrain of its actual practice.

For me this book's most interesting chapter is the one that focuses on lyric audiences. That chapter arrestingly begins by citing the use of transparent glass in certain public buildings of recent design to render the distinction between inside and outside, actor and observer, image and reflection, provocatively undecidable. Dubrow makes a telling use

of this architectural analogy to suggest that the *mise-en-scène* of the early modern lyric has been more complex than we have hitherto noticed, both with respect to the roles its author and/or speaker could occupy and with respect to the audiences its “rhetorics” put in play. The poems she uses to test this premise disclose a layering of audiences and a complex interplay of detachment and participation, diegetic and extra-diegetic perspectives, reception and performance. Turning to discourse analysis, a subfield of linguistics that has been pretty much ignored by literary critics, Dubrow garners fresh terminology and new ways to approach the potentially interchangeable positions of author, speaker and auditor in lyric poems.

Dubrow is a poet herself, and her deep knowledge of modern and contemporary poetry has enabled her to avoid parochial claims and emphasize continuities. Her critique of influential theorists such as T. S. Eliot, J. S. Mill, Northrop Frye, and Helen Vendler, whose treatment of the voicing of lyric has oversimplified its modes and strategies of address, gains traction not only in the context of early modern poetry studies but also *vis-à-vis* specialists in Romanticism and twentieth-century poetry, whose thinking about “the” lyric has all too often been limited to, and hence distorted by, the perspective of a particular historical moment or a particular set of aesthetic preferences. In the sixteenth and seventeenth century, as Dubrow points out, the possibility of addressing multiple audiences simultaneously, as well as of engineering shifts in positionality among these audiences within the same poem, was endemic within at least four subgenres of lyric that flourished simultaneously: love poetry, devotional verse, pastoral, and the literature of patronage. As she moves back and forth between these lyric subgenres, which she exemplifies both with canonical examples and with poems less often discussed, she builds sturdy bridges between them. Her account of how Protestant devotional practices—especially the novel practice of having the entire congregation participate in the singing of psalms—are likely to have contributed to the deployment of dynamically interactive and interchangeable subject positions in secular as well as religious lyrics is a small *tour de force* of historical scholarship. In terms of their impact on the lyric these devotional practices had been hiding in plain sight, their complexities occluded by the presumptive transparency and

coerciveness of religious practice.

Dubrow closes her book by suggesting that lyric poetry's relationship to subjectivity is overdue for reconsideration; such a reconsideration would be especially timely insofar as the Foucauldian and/or Althusserian approaches that have underwritten much recent work on subjectivity are also ripe for re-consideration, with a view to more nuanced understandings of the self as agent and the self-in-process. Perhaps she will give us that study herself, but until she does there is much to be gleaned from this book concerning the relationship between subjectivity and performance in a genre whose status is alternatively, and even on occasion simultaneously, that of artifact, memorial inscription or trace, and script for soliloquy or dialogue.

"Like all my previous books," Dubrow comments in a concluding chapter that is aptly titled "The Rhetorics of Lyric," "this study has attempted to foster a more capacious and generous approach to critical methodologies" (238-39). There is an ethical as well as an intellectual stance implicit in this retrospective statement of intention, and indeed Dubrow's goal of sustaining a "capacious" scholarly conversation is apparent on every page. She never succumbs to the temptation most of us know intimately, of seeking to create an audience for our subject by making large pronouncements that simplify its contours and achieve a specious clarity by suppressing nuance and accountability. Like her earlier books this one not only delivers a powerful set of lenses for re-reading the early modern lyric, but also harvests the work of other scholars in a spirit of judicious yet generous inclusiveness.

John T. Shawcross and Michael Lieb, eds. *"Paradise Lost: A Poem Written in Ten Books": An Authoritative Text of the 1667 First Edition*. Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 2007. xvi + 456 pp. bibl. \$68. Review by REUBEN SANCHEZ, TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY.

Michael Lieb and John T. Shawcross, eds. *"Paradise Lost: A Poem Written in Ten Books": Essays on the 1667 First Edition*. Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 2007. xii + 288 pp. index. append. \$60. Review by REUBEN SANCHEZ, TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY.